

STATE COUNCIL OF CIVIL DEFENSE  
MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

March 13, 1952

INFORMATION CIRCULAR NO. 21IMMEDIATE RELEASEROLE OF CIVIL DEFENSE IN "NATURAL" DISASTERS

1. The purpose of this circular is to provide information concerning the role of civil defense in "natural" disasters. The essential points are as follows:

2. The primary function of the State's civil defense organizations is to minimize the effects of enemy attacks of all kinds. Accordingly, State, county, city, borough, town and township civil defense officials, in conjunction with representatives of the State Police and the Department of Military Affairs, shall be in charge of emergency operations carried out in order to offset the effects of enemy action.

3. A secondary function of the State's civil defense organizations is to lend requested assistance in emergency operations necessitated by flood, fire, explosion and other types of "natural" disasters. Activities of this particular type shall be carried out in the manner outlined in Paragraph 4, immediately below.

4. The Governor's Emergency Disaster Committee (of which the State Director of Civil Defense is a Member) directs all emergency operations required by flood, fire, explosion and other "natural" disasters. The work is supervised by duly appointed County Disaster Coordinators, who are in full charge of all such activities within their respective counties. Accordingly, all civil defense workers engaged in "natural" disaster operations will serve under direction of the County Disaster Coordinator.

5. County Civil Defense Directors herewith are being furnished the latest list of County Disaster Coordinators for their information and guidance. In some counties, the same individual serves both as Civil Defense Director and as Disaster Coordinator. Where this is not the case, it is suggested that the Civil Defense Director contact the Disaster Coordinator and make known to him the fact that civil defense forces will furnish assistance in "natural" disasters upon his request.

6. In summary, the general policy is simply this: County and local civil defense organizations will not undertake "natural" disaster operations on their own initiative. However, upon request from County Coordinators serving the Governor's Emergency Disaster Committee, county and local civil defense organizations shall lend all possible aid in combatting "natural" disasters.

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